

Note for Record
May 27, 2014

By: Shoaib Sultan Khan
May 28, 2014

Subject: Meeting with Additional Chief Secretary (Dev)
Government of Sindh

Participants:

- Mr. Muhammad Waseem, Additional Chief Secretary (Dev)
& P&D Staff
- Mr. Bazin Benoist, European Union (EU)
- Mr. Amaury Hoste, EU
- Mr. Muhammad Imran Ashraf, EU
- Mr. Iqbal Sobhan, EU Formulation Mission
- Mr. Brian Fawertt, EU Formulation Mission
- Mr. Buzdar, EU Formulation Mission

Mr. Iqbal Sobhan (IS) gave a briefing on the findings of the Formulation Mission (FM) of the Mission's field visits to areas where NRSP, TRDP and SRSO are operating.

According to the Mission Leader, the lynchpin of the UC plan for poverty reduction is Social Mobilisation (SM) which achieves not only inclusion of the poor, it also mainly benefits the bottom wrung of the Poverty Score Card (PSC) reaching them through community investment fund (CIF) a&b), vocational training for employment, micro health insurance etc.

IS also emphasized the importance of social infrastructure i.e. education, health, potable drinking water and urged the involvement of government line departments in provision of these services and the importance of District Plan in achieving synergy and coherence with the SUCCESS project.

Mr. Bazin Benoist (BB) clarified that EU is not going to be a substitute for what government plans to do, EU can only complement and support the effort. EU expressed an interest in the UC Plan because of political commitment to the plan and its implementation in some districts of the province. EU as outsiders are not in a position to do it alone unless Government of Sindh (GoS) is the major partner and EU approval from Commission's headquarters in Brussels is dependent on inclusion of the budgetary allocation for implementation of UC Plan in the Annual

Development Plan (ADP) of the province. Brussels will only be convinced if government collaboration is forthcoming.

The ACS (Dev) explained that they are in the midst of preparing the budget and the ADP and are thinking to allocate adequate resources for District Plans, which may be 20 to 25 billion for the 29 districts, as the number of districts has gone up from 24 to 29 now. As the ADP expenditure for the current year has been only 110 billion out of budgeted 185 billion, the 2014-15 ADP is realistically being pitched at 165 billion.

ACS (Dev) informed that he had received the PC-I for SUCCESS for all the districts and has submitted a summary to the Chief Minister for his approval of the budgetary allocation from government resources. He appreciated the gesture of EU in coming to help the provincial government with funding in implementing SUCCESS and by June 11, a decision would have been taken in the matter.

BB clarified that the decision on SUCCESS at Brussels will be taken in July and if the government is able to convey its budgetary commitment to the UC Plan by then, EU can wait for it. BB further observed that experience has shown that top down planning does not benefit the poor, even if it is done at the district level. The great advantage and effectiveness of SUCCESS or UC Plan is that it is bottom up planning and in reality each poor rural household is involved in decision making about their own development.

The ACS assured that GoS is fully committed and supportive of UC Plan and there is no question of either the willingness or commitment of government to SUCCESS Project not forthcoming. It is only a question of two to three weeks GoS commitment to UC Plan would be finalized. In the meanwhile ACS offered EU and the mission any facilitation they required including his preparedness to meet them.